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ABSTRACT

A classroom technique for English-as-a-Second-Language instruction using comparative (first- and second-language) sentence analysis is described. The goal is to enhance acquisition of English through internalizing a certain number of sample sentences in English that contrast with the learner's first language (L1). The sentences consist of about 1,000 "global English" expressions used in daily life. The procedure involves (1) listening to the sentence, (2) imitating it, (3) rehearsing individually, (4) transferring the information to cards, separating the English sentence into "sense-groups" and translating it into Japanese, (5) internalizing the sentence structure, (6) transcribing the sentence in a dictation exercise, and (7) sentence use in conversation. Research on comprehensible input, learning readiness, and neuropsychology suggest that this approach will help learners internalize English sentences. (Contains 32 references.) (MSE)

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THE USEFULNESS OF BILINGUAL SENTENCE ANALYSIS

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THE USEFULNESS OF BILINGUAL SENTENCE ANALYSIS*

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Abstract

The procedure, "Bilingual Sentence Analysis," with Global English (defined later) as a target, is designed to help students internalize English. It involves seven steps, beginning with listening and leading to conversation. This is accomplished in three ways: contrasting L1 with L2, dividing short sentences into "sense groups," and the process of "self-error-correction."

Key Words: Bilingual Sentence Analysis, Basic English, SLA

The goal of "Bilingual Sentence Analysis" (Mizuno, 1995) is to enhance the acquisition of English through internalizing a certain number of example sentences in English that contrast with the learner's L1. These sentences consist of around one thousand "Global English[1]" expressions which are used in daily life.

The teaching procedure in Bilingual Sentence Analysis is as follows:

(1) Listening, (2) Imitating, (3) Rehearsing, (4) Tansfering, (5) Internalizing, (6) Dictation, and (7) Conversation.

The activities of (1) to (3), and (6) and (7) are done in the class, while (4) and (5) are assigned to individual learners as assignments.

* A Revized Paper Presented at 11th World Congress of the International Association of Applied Linguistics, Jyvaskyla University, Finland, 1996

To give an example, distributing the copy of example sentences for one week to the class, the teacher first introduces how to read the English sentences by dividing it into "sense groups."

Particularly at the early stage of this step the teacher may guide the learners toward a better knowledge of English phonetics. The learners then imitate the teacher's pronunciation before practicing them individually. For instance, several phenomena of the articulation in English such as sound shift, linking, assimilation, dissimilation, contraction, strong form & week form, and intonation, etc.

Before a transferring assignment, the learners make cards of the example sentences by Japanese on one side of them and by "sense groups" in English on another, each sense group making a different line as seen in the followig diagram :

The number at the upper left corner of the card is the serial number, which helps students to put cards in order at any time, or to

check some lost cards. Each line of this sentence is a sense group (or breath group). The reverse side is the corresponding Japanese sentence as it is shown above. Let's consider some examples of the contrast between English and Japanese sentences as seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

The Contrast of English and Japanese Sentences

1. This will *make* a good picture.
   Kore wa e ni *naru*.
   （これは絵になる。）
2. You are *a good judge* of men.
   Anata wa otoko wo *miru me* ga ari masu ne.
   （あなたは男を見る目がありますね。）
3. A kind woman *saw* me *across* the street.
   Shinsetuna onnanohito ga ite watashi *to issho ni* douro wo *watatte kureta*.
   （親切な女の人がいて私と一緒に道路を渡ってくれた。）
4. I didn't *put* him *in the picture* for that reason.
   Souiu wake de kare niwa *uchiake* sakatta no desu.
   （そういうわけで彼には打ち明けなかったのです。）
5. I have only come round *to see how* you are getting on.
   Ogenki de irassharu *kato*, chotto oyorishite mimashita.
   （お元気でいらっしゃるかと、ちょっとお寄りしてみました。）
6. *Nothing* gives me *more* pleasure *than* sailing.
   Watashi ni totte yotto ni noru koto *hodo* tanoshii *mono wa ari masen*.
   （私にとってヨットに乗ることほど楽しいものはありません。）
7. The window over the door is kept open *to let air in and out*.
   Kanki no tameni doa no ue no mado wa akete ari masu.
   （換気のためにドアの上の窓は開けてあります。）
8. You *are giving* all your time to pleasure. Do some learning.
   Asonde *bakari inai de sukoshi wa* benkyou demo shi nasai.
   （遊んでばかりいないで少しは勉強でもしなさい。）
9. I'll give you the news *when* he *come back*.
   Kare ga *modotte kitara* anata ni oshirase shi masu.
   （彼が戻ってきたらあなたにお知らせします。）
10. I *didn't* get married to you *because* I had a love for you.
    Anata wo aishite ita *kara* anata to kekkon shita *wake dewa ari masen*.
    （あなたを愛していたからあなたと結婚したわけではありません。）

No. 1. This will *make* a good picture.

(Korè wa ē ni *naru.*)

In this case, most Japanese learners tend to take "become" for "make." As a result they will frequently make such errors.

No. 2. You are *a good judge* of men.

(Anata wa otoko wo *miru me* ga ari masu nè.)

In this case, there is a large conceptual gap between both languages. On one hand "a good judge" in English ; on the other "miru mè" in Japanese. As a result they are in danger of using "eyes" instead of "judge."

No. 3. A kind woman *saw* me *across* the street.

(Shinsetuna onnanohito ga itè watashi to *isshoni* douro wo *wattatte kureta.*)

Most Japanese learners are awkward to use the verb "see" as seen in this sentence. They will frequently make error like "walked across the street with me."

No. 4. I didn't *put* him *in the picture* for that reason.

(Souiu wakè dè karè niwa *uchiake* nakatta no desu.)

The point here is "put him in the picture" in English in contrast to "put him in the picture" in Japanese. It is very hard for Japanese to make such a structure in English. They will rather say it like "talk him clearly," but it is not Global English and not necessarily express the shade of difference in meaning. So it is worth while internalizing this sentense.

No. 5. I have only come round *to see how* you are getting on.

(Ogenki dè irassharu *kato*, chotto oyorishitè mimashita.)

Most Japanese will have trouble in putting the meaning of "kato" in Japanese into English. The structure "kato" is able to generalize in the form of [to see + Interogatives]. This structure is one of patterns in English that Japanese are to learn by heart.

No. 6. *Nothing* gives me *more* pleasure *than* sailing.

(Watashi ni totte yotto ni noru koto *hodo* tanoshii *mono wa ari masen.*)

This case brings out the striking contrast in the way of thinking between English and Japanese. It is very hard for most Japanese to make the English sentences with negative subject. Therefore, the learners will have conflict in the way of expression when making this sort of English sentences. In general, the expressions in English are more analytical than those in Japanese. The following is the case.

No. 7. The window over the door is kept open *to let air in and out.*
(*Kanki no tame ni* doa no ue no mado wa aketē ari masu.)

The Japanese expression "Kanki no tame ni" is abstract and not analytical, most Japanese are not used to this way of expression by using the basic words.

No. 8. You *are giving* all your time to pleasure. Do some learning.
(Asondē *bakari inai de* sukoshi wa benkyou dēmo shi nasai.)

This is the case of an emotional expression in English which is put in the form of "present progressive." Only a few Japanese learners have this knowledge. So they are not able to put this meaning in English without any trouble.

No. 9. I'll give you the news *when* he *comes back.*
(Karē ga *modottē kitara* anata ni oshirasē shi masu.)

Most Japanese learners are liable to take the Japanese form "modottē kitara" as a past tense though it is an aspect of completion. Here is a big difference between both languages in the way of expression.

No. 10. I *didn't* get married to you *because* I had a love for you.
(Anata wo aishitē ita *kara* anata to kekkon shita *wake dēwa ari masēn.*)

This means that I got married to you but it was not because I had a love for you. Not a few Japanese learners will take this sentence as "I didn't get married to you, and it was because I had a love for you." This makes a contradictory statement. So this is a typical example of showing that they have a synthetic constraints in making English sentences like this.

At the step of (5) the learners may recognize through "self error correction," the differences between their translation and the English example sentences in their text. This will give the individual learners a practical exercise in the process of internalizing through acheivement motivation. From this exercise, the form and mearning of the example sentences are integrated as learners repeat them until they become automatic and spontaneous in usage.

A dictation test a week later will help reinforce the sentences learners have memorized as they write them. After, students converse in pairs using the sentences with their classmates.

Several researchers in this field argues that comprehensible input contributes to SLA. However, the available evidence tells us that comprehensible input alone is inadequate. For instance, learners in long term immersion programmes do not necessarily develop full target language proficiency. Especially in acquisition poor environments, even if comprehensible input can facilitate acquisition, it is not necessarily sufficient for acquisition.

The first requisite of SLA is the optimal time (or readiness) for acquisition. It is also necessary to have the opportunity of experiencing the same input again and again. In addition, a learner's internal factors (prior knowledge, attention and motivation), and external factors (ways of instruction), along with the interaction between them are key requisites of SLA.

According to Vygotsky (1978), it is quality instruction that enhances of L2 acquisition if it is given during an optimal period. Cognitive theorists share the idea that learning occurs through a meaningful process of relating new items to already existing concepts in an individual cognitive structure.

After the high school stage, the learner's cognitive structure is well developed. Therefore, it becomes possible for the learners at this stage to understand more easily or directly L2 input through their knowledge of L1 without depending on any concrete or sensual

experience.

At this stage the advantages of using L1 are much greater[2] because there are both different and common features between L1 and L2. These common features are likely to be unmarked, and so more easily acquired.

Recent findings in neuropsychology suggest that there is a cerebral storage of L1 sentences which we take and rearrange information when we use our L1. Hence, it is very important to internalize the L2 sentences in early stage of SLA.

In conclusion, by internalizing example sentences using the method which I have discussed, as an application of C.K. Ogden's simple "Basic English" system, the peoples of the world can reach for greater mutual understanding through the use of English.

Note

1. Global English is International Second Language that expanded the vocabulary of Ogden's Basic English into around 1000 words but follows only the system rule to interact internationally. It is free from sound or acts like native speakers for effective use of this English. Basic English has lots of advantages as the tool for international communications than any other artificial languages. It is a simplified system of English language intended as a uniform, standardized means of international communications. This sytem derives its vocabulary and grammar from English, but reduces both to a remarkable extent : there are 850 basic vocabulary items, 600 of which are nouns and 150 of which are adjectives. The remaining 100 items are operative words such as "do," "among," "very," "the," "not," and "when." Only 16 verbs are used, and these are conjugated as in standard English, but through combination with direction words such as "at," "in," "with," 16 verbs can replace over 4000 verbs in full English (e.g. "put together" for "assemble" or "combine" ; "make up" for "invent" ; "take picture" for "photograph"). Other than rules for conjugating verbs, there are only a few rules concerned with formation of purals, comparative degrees of adjectives, and use of prefixes and suffixes as un- , -er, -ed, -ing, and -ly.

   Therefore, the advantages of Basic English are as follows :

(1) It has more simplified conjugations, and more international words.

(2) The usefulness of each Basic Word is quite high becasue the selection of 850 words was based on its meanings and functions, which facilitates the affluent and simple expression.
(3) The vocabulary comprises words of few syllables.
(4) It is free from the confusion of pronunciation because it has only a few homonyms.
(5) It is easy to memorize the spelling and articulation due to the small vocabulary and no accentuation marks as seen in German and French.
(6) It is easy to learn due to the simplified grammar.
(7) In addition, it has a special device for mechanical communications such as telephone, faccimili, and computer communications like e mail and internet.

2. The advantages of using L1 in the foreign language classroom are as follows:
(1) It enhances the efficiency of the language teaching.
(2) It avoids the learner's inner stress which results in reducing their achievement motivation of L2 learning.
(3) It maintains the teachers' confidence in their communication to the class.
(4) It enhances the appropriateness of test questions.

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